

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BRUSSE 09706 191656Z
ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 AF-04 NSCE-00 SSO-00 INR-05
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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6633
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER IMMEDIATE
USNMR SHAPE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T BRUSSELS 09706

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: MOPS, PINS, CASC, CG, FR, BE
SUBJECT: KOLWEZI OPERATION - BELGIAN PLANNING

1. BELGIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY CHEF DE CABINET, ALFRED CAHEN, TOLD US LATE AFTERNOON MAY 19 THAT THE BELGIAN CABINET WOULD MEET ONCE AGAIN AT 2100L TO DECIDE WHETHER TO GIVE GO-AHEAD ORDER TO BELGIAN FORCES PREPOSITIONED AT KAMINA TO PROCEED TO KOLWEZI AND EFFECT EVACUATION OF BELGIAN AND OTHER POTENTIAL EVACUEES THERE. CAHEN SAID THAT BY TIME MEETING CONVENED THEY HOPE TO HAVE FIRM INTELLIGENCE ON HOW FRENCH PARATROOPERS ARE DOING IN KOLWEZI AND THAT SUCH INFORMATION WOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN THE BELGIAN DECISION-MAKING PROCESS. CAHEN SAID
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BELGIANS ARE WORRYING WHETHER SMALL SIZE OF FRENCH CONTINGENT IS SUFFICIENT TO ASSURE SAFETY OF SIZEABLE FOREIGN COMMUNITY IN KOLWEZI. HE SAID HE WOULD TELEPHONE US AND LET US KNOW THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT DECISION RIGHT AFTER MEETING. SHOULD DECISION BE TO PROCEED, HE EXPECTED BELGIAN FORCES TO LAND AT KOLWEZI AIRPORT AT THE FIRST LIGHT OF DAWN MAY 20.

2. CAHEN CHARACTERIZED CURRENT FRENCH ACTION AS

"A FRENCH OPERATION AND WE HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH IT."

HE SAID THAT HE AND MFA SPOKESMAN VAN USSEL WILL MEET
WITH THE PRESS AT 1700L AND MAKE THIS POINT, STRESSING

"NO BELGIAN PARTICIPATION WHATEVER."

3. CAHEN SAID THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN BELGIAN

GOVERNMENT'S PHILOSOPHY ON PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF

OPERATION: A LIMITED HUMANITARIAN UNDERTAKING SEEKING

TO EFFECT THE EVACUATION OF BELGIAN AND FOREIGN CITIZENS

FROM AN AREA OF CONFLICT. HE SAID THAT ACCORDING

TO BELGIAN INFORMATION, FRENCH FORCES STILL PLAN TO

STAY IN THE KOLWEZI REGION AND ESTABLISH ORDER, ALTHOUGH

THERE SEEMS TO BE SOME EFFORT TO RECRUIT OTHER AFRICAN

FORCES TO TAKE THEIR PLACES AFTER A PERIOD OF TIME.

CHAMBERS

SECRET

NNN

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